

Saturday morning, November 22, 1986  
Morning after Eva Nordland reception  
Phone call with MBG

DE: "I had some brilliant thoughts this morning, based on my dreams last night."

MBG: "And you say I'm too adoring of you. Guess who is equally adoring."

"But I don't say things like to other people."

So why does it bug me so much when she does, to me and to others? "When you say it I feel it as a kind of trap, an effort to enslave me...like my Mother."

MBG: "When I give you such adulation, adoration, it's treating you...as if you were a god. And then..."

Well, what's so bad about that, so dangerous? Maybe it's as if I were a kind of demi-god, a half-god, like Hercules (?) or Prometheus (wasn't one of them a son of a Titan?)...a god's son, a hero, "Who has to take great risks, to be worthy, or to be accepted as a god, or he'll be nothing..."

As for my mother: a life of risks as a concertizer, each time with everything at stake...

I recall: I took my Ph. D. orals after a term and a half, feeling that I had great gaps, vulnerabilities (no course in international trade, for example)...but that I couldn't back down in the face of "everyone's" expectation that I was ready for them, lest I lose my mystique, become just an ordinary nothing graduate student, not a wunderkind.

(And, I note, I rarely have really failed such a test. E.g., if I fail to get the MacArthur grant after really trying and completing a proposal, that will be very unusual, almost a first. I have often failed to complete a submission, meet a deadline, but...)

A god, then, who risks or sacrifices himself...

MBG: We know who did that, 2000 years ago... A man/woman god..."I've always thought of Jesus as both male and female...In fact, I think of Jesus as a Jewish mother." (Sacrificing himself for others, creating feelings of obligation and guilt.)

(Who said: "Gandhi is a Jewish mother"?)

DE: "Well, think of it this way. Mary is a Jewish mother, right? Nothing but. (Ironical that Catholics worship the feminine in the form of Mary, unequivocally a Jewish mother). She's

supposed to be immaculately conceived--a late Marian dogma, late 19th century (?)--but that doesn't make her a god. So Jesus is the son of a Jewish mother...without a human father. What does that do for his identification with his Jewish mother?"

"Likewise, I had a Jewish mother without much of a father present." (MBG sees a strong female identification in me, as a result). (But Jesus didn't have to blame himself for the death of his Jewish mother...or for benefitting from it, getting her off his back and winning intimacy with his father, who actually did the killing. That would really have given him a reason to accept cruxifixion!)

DE: Jewish fathers don't accept Jesus, or anyone else, as the Messiah. But I wonder about Jewish mothers: Is it unknown, or rare, for them to fantasy that their sons might be the Messiah?!

MBG: "Well, this is a deep secret, but I had that fantasy, about Tommy: that he might be the savior of humanity."

"I've had that thought about Robert. And he might still be, though Peggy slows him down."

"Peggy said [at dinner, recently]: 'Robert is a saint.'"

True.

"She said: 'He's a saint...to put up with me.'"

DE: "Think about this. Mary had an Annunciation; she was visited while she was pregnant, and told that her son would be King of Kings, etc. My Mother had an Annunciation, too: She knew, during her pregnancy, that I would be a boy, and would be a great pianist, a Horowitz..."

So that's what I had to live up to. Or be nothing, outcast. Which is probably why I don't warm up to being excessively praised by Margaret. It is being coerced, seduced, to live up to extreme standards, obligated to take great risks...

Mark Raskin quit the piano at 16, when he placed second in a competition for the first time.

Different subject: Why do so many young handsome men make strong passes at MBG? (Affleck, Scheer, Stockwell, others.) My guess: They see a combination of Priestess (uncanny early mother, with wisdom, secret knowledge, conferring potential power, over themselves) and Temple Whore/Slut, capable of lusty sexuality without guilt or obligation, "like a man," capable of making love with someone she likes on short notice, without being in love...

Latter fantasy is untrue to her. "But then, every man has had the experience of pursuing this fantasy with some--he hopes--loose woman, only to find instead he has a clinging dependent

woman in love with him, demanding love, marriage, children..."